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DE RUEHNT #0126/01 0301357
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9138
INFO RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 3675
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA 9885
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 4289
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0155
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 0062
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 0167
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 3884
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 2151
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0243
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0829
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 1737
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0966
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0102
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2279
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TASHKENT 000126

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN AND DRL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/30/2018
TAGS: [PHUM KIRF](#) [PGOV UZ](#)
SUBJECT: FURTHER AMNESTIES OF POLITICAL PRISONERS
REPORTEDLY FORTHCOMING

REF: A. TASHKENT 22
[1](#)B. 07 TASHKENT 2183
[1](#)C. TASHKENT 79

Classified By: POLOFF R. FITZMAURICE FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: In the past week, poloff has conversed with several human rights contacts who expressed optimism that additional high-profile political prisoners would soon be amnestied. Those reportedly in line for amnesty include Ezgulik activist Dilmurod Muhidinov, Pentacostalist pastor Dmitry Shestakov, and Andijon-based human rights activist Mutabar Tojiboyeva. Recently, the GOU also has taken some positive steps in the civil society realm, including granting preliminary approval for the registration of a German NGO, the Fredrick Neumann Foundation, and unblocking access to the websites of USAID partner organizations (septel). While these are all encouraging signs, we are still waiting for the Government to actually release a broader range of political prisoners. In a less positive development, authorities in Bukhara on January 30 detained two members of the Human Rights Alliance. End summary.

EZGULIK REPORTS MUHITDINOV TO BE AMNESTIED

[1](#)2. (C) During Ezgulik's annual board meeting on January 25, Chairman Vasiliya Inoyatova announced that prison authorities informed her that Ezgulik activist Dilmurod Muhitdinov would be amnestied soon. Muhitdinov is currently being held in prison 64-29 in Navoi province. In 2006, a court in the Ferghana Valley sentenced Ezgulik member Dilmurod Muhitdinov to five years' imprisonment on politically-motivated charges of anti-constitutional activity. Mukhitdinov was reportedly tortured in prison this year and suffered two broken arms (ref A).

AMNESTIED DEFENDER MAKES APPEARANCE AT EZGULIK MEETING

13. (C) Human rights defender Karim Bozorboyev, who was
amnestied earlier this month (ref A), was also present at the
Ezgulik board meeting. Bozorboyev appeared to be in good
health, and thanked Ezgulik for providing a lawyer, which in
his words, made "all the difference" (Comment: Ezgulik
received 500 dollars through the State Department's Global
Human Rights Defender Fund to pay for Bozorboyev's lawyer.
End note.) He also thanked the United States for advocating
on his behalf.

FORUM 18 CONTACT EXPECTS PASTOR TO BE AMNESTIED

14. (C) On January 25, lawyer Nail Gabdullin, one of Forum
18's main contacts in Uzbekistan, told poloff that he had
sent in a written request for amnesty for imprisoned Andijon
pastor Dmitry Shestakov and received a written response that
officials were looking into the issue. Gabdullin was
optimistic that Shestakov would be amnestied and offered to
arrange a meeting with Shestakov's wife. Two other
Protestants convicted of teaching religion illegally, Nikolai
Zulfikarov and Salavat Serikbayev, have already had their
sentences suspended under the December 2007 amnesty.
Gabdullin said that a third Protestant from Karakalpakstan,
Makset Djabbarbergenov, remains wanted in Uzbekistan for
teaching religion illegally and is currently hiding in
Kazakhstan.

TOJIBOYEVA RECEIVES MEDICAL TREATMENT IN PRISON

15. (C) On January 30, poloff talked with Tojiboyeva's
brother Rasul, who reported that Tojiboyeva has recently
received medical treatment in prison and that her health
appears to be improving. However, he was pessimistic that
Tojiboyeva would be granted amnesty, noting that less than
five percent of inmates at the Tashkent Women's Colony (where
Tojiboyeva is being held) have been amnestied, even though
the December 2007 amnesty specifically lists women as a group
of individuals to be amnestied (ref B). On the other hand,
Open Dialogue Project Director Mjusa Sever reported being
told by GOU contacts that Tojiboyeva would be amnestied. In
addition, Sever reported that the government planned to
announce another amnesty during the Navruz holiday in March
(ref C).

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS REPORTEDLY DETAINED IN BUKHARA

16. (C) In a less positive development, authorities in
Bukhara on January 30 detained two members of the Human
Rights Alliance, Abdillo Tojiboy ugli and Elena Uralayeva, as
they tried to attend a trial of seventeen individuals accused
of religious extremism. According to Alliance member Akhtam
Shaymardanov, who was able to briefly talk to Tojiboy ugli on
his cell phone, the two were held at the Bukhara Ministry of
Internal Affairs building and were later taken to the Bukhara
City Criminal Court. It is still unclear on what charges
they are being held. Both Tojiboy ugli and Uralayeva have
been detained by authorities on several occasions in the
past, usually before public protests organized by the
Alliance.

COMMENT

17. (C) Though the activists' optimism is a potentially
positive sign, we are still considering how most effectively
to prompt the Government to release a broader range of
political prisoners. If Sever's information about another
amnesty is correct, then it is possible that the Government
is planning on releasing a greater number of political
prisoners in March, shortly before the EU's decision in
April on whether to extend its visa-ban waiver against
selected Uzbek officials.

